



Information from the City of Battle Creek

Clearing snow

Keeping city streets safe and clear in the winter

February 2015

What it takes to clear 300 miles of city streets

It's not easy plowing 300 miles of city streets, especially after a large, fast winter storm, as Battle Creek saw in early February.

The Streets Division, in the Department of Public Works, takes the lead on keeping plow trucks on the road 24/7 until streets are clear. During especially big snows, multiple other city departments help out.

Here are some more plowing facts and recommendations:

- ⇒ The trucks hit the curb a lot, trying to plow snow away as close as possible.
- ⇒ Some drivers may honk when they pass cars parking on the street, in case the owner is home and can move it, as well as when they're about to pass residents out shoveling, to make them aware of the truck.
- ⇒ Even the large plow trucks get stuck in the snow, most often coming around corners at slow speeds as they try to plow close to the curb.
- ⇒ It takes a lot of maneuvering and attention to plow—there are various buttons and levers used for shifting and controlling front and under-carriage plows, as well as the need to constantly use all the mirrors on the front of the plow. With this in mind, please give plows plen-

ty of space on the street, especially when multiple plows are driving together.

- ⇒ While minor snows require three (or more) passes on each side of the street, larger snows require five (or more) passes on each side. That takes some time to do on every street in the city. Plows work from the center of the street to the curb.



⇒ Plowing is "complete" when trucks have passed curb to curb on each city street.

However, cleanup continues after that, including more work on intersections and boulevard cross-overs, as well as hauling snow piles to places like the airport and under the Washington Avenue bridge.

- ⇒ **Plowing priorities** are: 1) State trunklines and major streets, plus streets around schools; 2) Battle Creek Transit bus routes; 3) Residential streets; 4) Cul-de-sacs and alleys; 5) City-owned sidewalks.

Sometimes plows have to make numerous passes to keep the trunklines and major streets clear, before they can get to the residential and other streets.

- * When possible, please keep your trash and recycling containers on

the curb, or otherwise moved out of the way so the plow truck can come through to the curb and not knock over containers and spill debris.

- * If you have a **hydrant** in your yard, please clear the snow around it so the Fire Department can see and access it, in case of emergency.
- * If you have **sidewalks** on your property, home or business, please clear them. It is your responsibility to do so after a snow storm. While we understand some residents have trouble doing this, the safety of all residents is a high priority, and we want to avoid pedestrians walking in the streets. Helping a neighbor who needs assistance with sidewalk clearing can have positive impacts for our entire community.

- * It is a home owner's responsibility to clear snow from around your **mailbox**, to ensure carriers can deliver your mail.

- * Please note that shoveling/plowing snow into the street is hazardous to others and violates state law.



As plow driver Jimmy Moore said this winter, "We're out helping people, and that's the biggest thing."

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